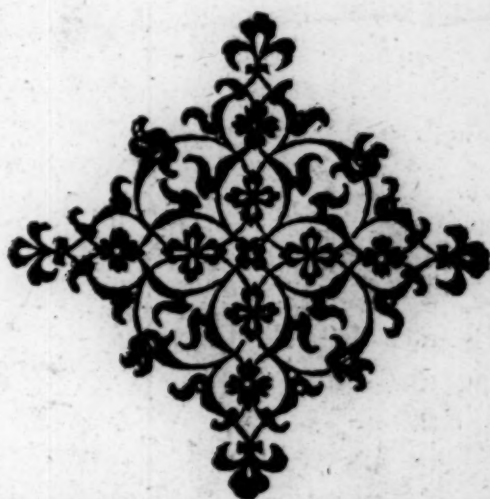


THE ¹³
PEACE
CONSIDERED:
IN A
LETTER
To a FRIEND.



THE
P E A C E

CONVINCED

IN A
L E T T E R

TO A FRIEND



THE P E A C E C O N S I D E R E D, &c.

Dear S I R,

AS to my Thoughts about *the Peace*, which you desire to know, I both hope and believe 'tis as good as concluded; I mean that *Preliminaries* are agreed upon *Here*, and will be shortly by the *rest of the Confederates*, on Terms so very *Safe and Honourable* to all *Europe*, and so very *advantagious* to *Britain*, that, especially in Regard to *OUR TRADE*, perhaps our Records can hardly produce the like. This, I believe, is little more or less than the *Truth* in every Particular, and some such *short Account*, as this is all perhaps you expected to hear from me; but, in my Opinion, neither the Question whether *Peace or not*, nor even the *Peace* it self, tho' set in more Views than one, ought to be *Considerations enough* for one who is to sit within *Those Walls* this Winter; but 'tis an Affair that deserves as much to be *considered* in its *Consequences* as its self, of what *Use or Service* it may be made to us, by a *right Application*, in Regard to our *Home-Affairs*, and what *ill Consequences* may very possibly attend a *Through Supineness* at this critical *Juncture*. These are Thoughts that have filled my Head so much of late, that I must, in Ease to my self, have communicated them to some Body; and by sending them to you, I shall have the Satisfaction of knowing *your Opinion*, how far my *Thoughts* may be allowed to be *just*, or my *Fears reasonable*.

First then, as to the *Peace* it self, taking it for granted to be *done*, and not hearing any Reason to suspect it not to be a

Good one, I entertain it as a *Blessing* sent from Heaven, and such as no other Generation but the *Whigs* could murmur at. 'Tis with the utmost Pleasure that I indulge my self in the Prospect of a Long, *Uninterrupted Tranquility*, all over Europe, attended with *Vast Riches* and *Plenty* (the certain Consequences of an *Enlarged*, free, and secure Trade) to *Our own Country*; and this compared with that of a *bloody, expensive, and* (notwithstanding our many Victories) *almost destructive War*, shows the *Happiness* in so full a Light, that I know not how to express the *Satisfaction* I feel from it, nor the *Thanks* I think due to those who have procured it to us.

And as the next pleasant View to that of an *approaching Happiness*, is the reviewing of *Dangers past, in Safety*, so from this *Peace, thus easily attained*, I cannot help looking back with a sort of horrible Pleasure on the *Danger* we have escaped of being involved in an *endless War*. When I consider *France* has been offering *no bad Terms* (in vain) ever since the Battle of *Rameilles*; when I reflect on the *Terms offered and rejected* last Year at *Gertrudenburg*, it amazes me to think what *Lengths in War* our late *Statesmen* (either through *Ignorance* in not knowing what was fit to ask or be accepted of, or through a *boundless Avarice and Ambition*, not content with a Ten Years, *Tyranny* and fleecing us) designed to have carried us; nor have I Sagacity enough to form even a *probable Guess* what *Time*, or what *Concessions from the Enemy*, or whether *Any*, would ever have been allowed by *Them* to be sufficient for putting a Period to this calamitous War: So that I ought not to congratulate you less upon the *War ended*, than the *Peace made*.

In both these *Views*, *Peace* surely must appear agreeable to every Man that has the least Love or *Tenderness* towards his *Country*; nor do I doubt, but as the *Scene opens more*, it will discover as much *Strength* as *Beauty*; so that on what it is that the *Whigs* ground their *pretended Fears*, I cannot imagine: I must confess indeed there is one *Danger* that justly ought, and I wish may be sufficiently apprehended; but it is what arises not from any Defect, but from the *Goodness* of it. I own I have

my Apprehensions lest this *Peace*, when the *Terms* of it shall be fully laid open to us, (as much as 'tis at present sullied by the senseless *Clamours* and *Stock-jobbing Artifices*, of the *Party*) may then shine forth in too strong a Lustre upon us, such at least as may serve to dazzle not a few of our Understandings, so as to hinder us from looking forward. 'Tis too probable, we shall be apt to sit down contented with the good Thing done for us, instead of proceeding vigorously to make such good and wholesome Laws as are yet necessary for the Preservation of our Constitution both in Church and State, and transmitting them down to Posterity in the same Security from Faction at Home, as our Liberties will be in from the Common Enemy Abroad. This is indeed a real Danger, and what we ought to use our utmost Care and Vigilance to prevent; for as this is the very Opportunity wherein we ought to exert our selves, and make the Nation's Happiness at once compleat, by a thorough subduing of her Home as well as Foreign Enemies; so if we now neglect to make a right Use of it, and should either through Supineness or Credulity let this Session slide over with nothing done (but this Peace) for the Satisfaction of the Country, I wish I be not a Cassandra; but I dare prophecy, that we shall heartily repent it before the next is over. We must therefore use a double Diligence to make our Triumph and Ovation keep equal Pace, and not suffer the Glories of the One so far to obscure the Other, as to render it neglected and forgot.

I am sensible I have already transgressed the Bounds of a Letter; but since I have laid it down as my Opinion, That some good Laws are yet absolutely necessary to the firm establishing of our Welfare at Home, and that this is the Opportunity of obtaining them, I must explain my self, but it shall be with all the Brevity that possibly I can.

To be very short then, I must frankly own, if either Church or State, were in Danger a Twelvemonth or Two ago, I do not see what new Barrier has been since granted them for their further Security. As to our Church-Affairs, when I consider the constant and unaccountable Disagreement of the Upper House of Convo-

Convocation from the Lower, in almost every Thing proposed, when *these Dissentions*, at their last Meeting, were sufficient to put a Stop to the Pursuit of an *Avowed Denyer* of our Saviour's Divinity, and hinder the *immediate Cause of God Himself*, from being *thoroughly vindicated*, I despair of any great Good to the Church from that Quarter.

And as to the State, let us look through the whole Administration, and see how much it differs from what it was in the worst Time of Danger; we shall find indeed some good Alterations towards the Head, but the Exterior Parts, altho' adjudged in Parliament to be corrupted to the last Degree, continue still the same: And if Comparisons betwixt Bodies Politick and Natural may be allowed of, I appeal to the whole College of Physicians, in what Degree of Safety they would pronounce that Body whose Head and noble Parts were only sound, and all the Limbs, tho' adjudged rotten, were obstinately refus'd to be cut off.

Yet this is our mysterious Case, therefore that some salutary Alteratives are needful, and would not be a little useful, may without much Difficulty be allowed; and that this is the Proper Time for applying the Remedy, I shall make my Observation from what was the Opinion of a very great Man, when he produced that Admirable Scheme of satisfying the Prodigious Debt the Nation labour'd under last Year: He told us, That tho' it might seem a Paradox, yet it was certainly true, that such a Debt was too big to be paid in Time of Peace. The Observation was worthy of the Wisdom and Experience of Him that made it, and it may serve to teach us, that such another Paradox may prove true too, if we should defer the taking Care of our selves, till Taxes and Assistance shall not be wanted: Therefore 'tis Now we ought to struggle as becomes us to answer the Expectations of those that sent Us, and I am almost of Opinion, that what would content both us and them, will hardly, if demanded, be denied us; but if we are now wanting to our selves, we must sit down for ever hereafter contented with only hoping for the Best.

This is the Time the Whigs will make their utmost Effort to attack the Ministry both upon their unsuccessful Expedition, and the

the *Terms of Peace*; and whilst there is a *Party* that will *mis-*
represent the one, and set forth every *Article of the other in the*
falsest Colours that 'tis possible for their *Rage and Malice*, and *Dis-*
appointment, to invent, 'tis not the *Reasonableness and Goodness*
of them will be, *solely*, able to *protect them*, but there must be
a firm and steady *Adherence* of honest *Gentlemen*, that will
not suffer *Themselves and Country* to be *imposed upon*; and surely
such a Service, tho' no more than just, will merit some *Regard*
from *Those whom it so much concerns* to have *them Both* appear in
the most fair and equal *Lights* that's possible: And when I
consider that all the *Return* expected is no more than (to use
the *Language of a Writer of no small Fame*) that the *dirty*
Under-Spurleathers may be laid aside with the worn-out Boots, one
would think the *Demand* not so *unreasonable*, but we may hope
to have it *granted*: And to ask *Assistance* only to get a few
good Laws a Passage through the *other House*, surely the *mutual*
or rather *general Benefit* will gain a ready *Compliance* in that
Point too; so that with a little *Conduct and Resolution*, I think
we may reasonably expect to see *this Session* produce as much
Good to the Country, (without coming near the *Prerogative of*
the *Queen*) as any that the *Experience of our oldest Member*
can boast of: But if *those are wanting* ———

Perhaps you may expect that I should name *these Laws*,
that I would have, and think will be of *so much Service*; but
that would be too *large an Undertaking*, and ought to be the
Produce of more as well as wiser Heads than mine; but I may
venture to say, that *some Bills* that have already appeared in
Publick, and gone through *Our House*, are not the less worth
considering again, because they have gone *no further*. The
Place Bill, which I shall always put in the *Front* of those that
may serve for *Bulwarks* against arbitrary *Councils*, whenever
such shall be entertained at *Court*, is what is *rather to be wish'd*
for than expected; for I believe no *Considerations* will ever
prevail with any *Ministry* (especially this, whose *Head* has
always openly opposed it) to give a *Helping Hand* to what
would prove so great a *Cramp* even to the best *Administra-*
tion.

tion, as well as a Security against the worst: And as there's no present Danger, I will suppose that must be postponed till some Times of Necessity shall force it through: But why mayn't a Bill against Occasional Conformity be now thought reasonable? That is a Bill will be of no small Use to both Church and State, and only prevents such a scandalous Practice and Sin, that I am satisfied there is not an honest quiet Dissenter, but when thoroughly convinc'd of the real Purport of it, would give his Vote for, or at least quietly acquiesce in it. Why should we not Repeal the Naturalization Act, and stop that Shuice that has already let in such a Flood of Beggary upon us? Or how can our great Man finish so well the Work he has so nobly begun as by paying what Remainders there are, or the Deficiencies that may have happen'd this Year, either with All or some Part of the Plunder that former Ministers or Favourites have ravish'd from the Crown, and diverted from the Use of the War? Such Laws as these, that occur to my small Experience, are what would give the Nation no small Satisfaction; but without Doubt, when you and other of our Friends shall meet, your Consultations may produce much better; and I hope you will enter into some Measures, of some Sort or other, to make this a more Significant Winter than the last, and not let any one Business, tho' of ever so great Importance, find us full Employment for the whole Sessions. Therefore I beg you would come up some little Time before the Session begins, and make Use of that Influence I know you have over your Countrymen, to have them here against the Opening of it. Our Friend G. W. has wrote into the North, so that I hope we shall have a full House at the very Beginning, and that our Appearance will be such as not to suffer us to be treated with Contempt, but that we shall find our selves able to do both Our selves and our Peace-makers Justice.

I am, &c.

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